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MAYOR EMANUEL EXPANDS LOCAL FIGHT AGAINST OPIOID EPIDEMIC

*City invests an additional \$500,000 to support treatment and recovery,
launches [overcomeopioids.com](http://www.overcomeopioids.com), a new online resource*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and the Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) today announced increased efforts to expand Chicago's fight against the opioid epidemic facing cities and towns across the nation. As part of the Mayor's 2018 budget proposal, the City will invest an additional \$500,000 for a total investment of \$2.95 million to prevent and treat substance use disorders. The proposed \$500,000 will support an additional 500 individuals in 2018, through Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) and recovery homes, evidence-based practices helping Chicago residents working to overcome addictions to opioids.

"Overdose deaths from heroin and other opioids are skyrocketing across the country, but Chicago is answering the challenge by investing in our communities and working together to find new solutions," said Mayor Emanuel. "Chicago is investing in treatment and recovery services because we know people can overcome addiction with the proper supports."

As part of the City's ongoing efforts, CDPH is expanding outreach and education. This week CDPH launched www.overcomeopioids.com, a new online resource hub providing information about services and providers for residents, their family members, and community advocates. Later this year, CDPH will also issue a new Request for Proposal (RFP) to support community health workers to provide education on overdose prevention, naloxone administration, and treatment options.

CDPH also released its latest [Epidemiology Report](#) analyzing overdose deaths involving opioids in Chicago from 2015 to 2016. According to the report released by CDPH, there were 741 fatal opioid-related overdoses in Chicago in 2016, an increase of 74 percent from 2015. Following trends seen in other cities, the majority of the increase in opioid-related overdose deaths can be attributed to increases in fentanyl-related overdoses, an opioid that is 50-100 times stronger than heroin. In Chicago, more than 90 percent of overdose deaths were from heroin use or illicit fentanyl.

The increased investment provides critical resources at a time when the opioid crisis is worsening both around the country and in Chicago.

The new report also shows that every ethnic group, every adult age group and every neighborhood has been impacted. Of all Chicago residents who died of opioid-related overdose in 2016, African American residents account for 48 percent, White residents 34 percent and Latino residents 17 percent. Residents between the ages of 45 and 64 account for nearly half of all opioid-related deaths. Residents of 73 of Chicago's 77 neighborhoods died of an opioid overdose.

"Addiction impacts every one of us, and it is our shared responsibility to provide the resources, information and evidence-based treatment necessary to help overcome opioids," said CDPH Commissioner Julie Morita, M.D. "By investing in expanded medication assisted treatment, community health workers and education, we are better equipped to face these ongoing challenges."

These efforts to combat opioid addiction follow recommendations made in October 2016 by the Chicago and Cook County Task Force on Heroin, which Mayor Emanuel took a lead role in convening. Under the Mayor's leadership, the City has undertaken numerous efforts to fight opioid addiction. In 2014, the City sued five big drug companies for deceptive marketing of prescription opioids and for misleading experts and patients about the risks of OxyContin and other opioids, helping to fuel the opioid epidemic. In 2016, Mayor Emanuel reached a major agreement with Pfizer to ensure strict standards in its marketing and promotion of opioids. As part of this work, the City is developing a community and provider education effort privately funded at \$375,000 by Pfizer, CVS, Walgreens and Filler Foundation. In addition, the Chicago Police Department is conducting a pilot program that diverts low-level drug offenders to treatment in lieu of an arrest and criminal record.

In July 2017, the City of Chicago Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection and CDPH announced the new Regulated Business License for Pharmaceutical Representatives to support the City's efforts to stop deceptive marketing and curb addiction to opioids and other prescription drugs. Any person who markets or promotes pharmaceuticals in Chicago is required to obtain a license, complete mandatory ethics training, receive continuing education and be subject to potential disclosure of their interactions with health care professionals, including gifts. The license has up freed up \$700,000 a year and allows CDPH to provide opioid addiction support to an additional 1,000 Chicago residents who live primarily on the south and west sides.

The full CDPH Epidemiology Report can be viewed at https://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/cdph/tobacco_alcohol_and_drug_abuse/2016ChicagoOpioidReport.pdf

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